

wants to associate with a democratic Europe, that they be allowed to strengthen themselves. We cannot have a timidity on behalf of Europe, so busy worrying about their pocketbook that they will stamp on their principles. Some European countries are now wavering about sanctions. I would suggest to them that they are dangerously providing an opportunity for Russia to continue its aggressive and illegal acts.

You must have principles. You must provide the strength to sanction. One can travel through the years of history in the 20th century and be reminded of those who get one step of aggression and watch as they march across Europe. I am very glad that there will be no meeting of G8 in Sochi, and I would ask that we continue to isolate Russia. Russia violates the human rights of its own people. It does not even recognize the LGBT community, and they are persecuted. What more do we have to hear from Russia and its head of government to not know that they must suffer the consequences of their acts.

I stand with the people of Ukraine because I believe in democracy, I believe in peace and human dignity, and I believe America has those values that we can ensure through the world family that Russia understands that they are not part of the world order of democracy and the freedom of people.

I might also add, Mr. Speaker, as a senior member of the Homeland Security Committee, all of us have watched, some with intenseness the Malaysian aircraft. With great disappointment and sadness, we are told, without all of the facts, not knowing what the recent announcements have been, that this aircraft, this airliner may be lost. But it opens our eyes to the crisis of airline security and technology.

I call upon the aviation industry to stop hiding behind costs and how much it costs and start ensuring that our pilots and our customers, our flying public are safe. Why do we have the capacity to dismantle the transponders? Why wasn't the emergency call already in place that automatically signals when an aircraft goes off its designated destination as relates to its flight pattern? Why does it have to be done manually? The mysterious turn. Homeland Security will be having a hearing on the false passport.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, it is overdue for us to pass comprehensive immigration reform, and I will continue that discussion.

COERCIVE CONTRACEPTION MANDATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, there is no shortage of issues here in Washington, and I find it so interesting when people come to our offices and ask: What is going on today?

As you will hear, whether it is talking about foreign affairs, the job issues, the budget, the issues that are of such concern to our constituents, there is always something that is on the front burner, and today is one of those days. The Supreme Court will hear yet another legal challenge to one of the many unconstitutional aspects of ObamaCare, and that is the HHS contraception mandate. Of course, this isn't the first time that the Affordable Care Act, the President's health care law, has been pulled into the Supreme Court, and it is probably not going to be the last, but today the hearing is on the contraception mandate.

No American should have to choose between feeding their family and abiding by their faith. I have to tell you, that is what we see happening right now. It is precisely what this coercive contraception mandate is doing to millions of hardworking people of faith, like the Hahns and the Greens, who simply want to run a business and practice their faith. These family businesses want to take care of their employees and provide them with quality health care coverage. All they ask is to not be forced to pay for the life-ending contraceptives that violate their religious convictions.

Now, ObamaCare's unreasonable mandate has placed them in a bind: violate the tenets of their faith or be fined, fined by the Federal Government, fined by ObamaCare, fined \$100 per employee per day. That is what the fine works out to be. Unbelievably, it would be cheaper to strip their employees of health care coverage altogether and pay a single \$2,000 fine per employee per year. That is what you find in the 20,000 pages of regulation, in the 2,700 pages of the President's health care law.

That is not what these family businesses want to do. They really want to do the right thing and take care of the hardworking men and women who are in their employment.

If these family businesses are forced to close or drop health care for their employees, it will be the employees and their families who are made to suffer.

This mandate is just another flawed part of a terribly flawed law, and Americans are growing tired of having to cope with it. Fifty-nine percent of the country opposes the contraception mandate because they know what the Greens and the Hahns know. This is a country founded on religious liberty, and that freedom of conscience is a cherished American tradition. The American people know that and they value that; they value that liberty and they value that tradition.

The Obama administration has already doled out special exemptions to 100 million health care plans from this mandate, and for every reason under the sun except religious liberty. In fact, the HHS mandate only explicitly contains a religious exemption for churches and their affiliates. The

Obama administration even expects hospitals and religious nonprofits to abide by the mandate without complaint, as if the very founding principles of these organizations aren't outright violated by paying for life-ending contraceptives.

Unless it is a religious institution, the Obama administration seems to think no organization, not even a charity, is allowed to exercise the right of conscience, unless it is granted a special waiver from the administration, of course. The administration: What the government gives, the government can delay, and the government can take away. That is their plan.

It is my hope the Court will act to uphold the protections inherent in the First Amendment, respect America's long-held tradition to right of conscience, and let these families operate their businesses in accordance with their religious beliefs and tenets.

END HUNGER NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, earlier this year the House voted on the farm bill conference report, legislation that reauthorizes our Nation's agriculture policies as well as the preeminent antihunger program known as SNAP. I voted against the conference report both as a conferee and when it came before this House because it contained an \$8.6 billion cut to SNAP. Even worse, it was the second major cut to SNAP in less than 6 months.

I strongly believe in our Nation's antihunger programs. Unfortunately, there are about 49 million hungry people living in our great Nation. Technically known as food insecurity, the truth is that these are low-income people who don't know where their next meal will come from. America's antihunger programs, led by SNAP, provide food to people who otherwise would have difficulty finding it, if they were able to find access to food at all.

For years, I have talked about how SNAP works, and over the past year, I have led these End Hunger Now speeches about how SNAP and other antihunger programs are working to reduce hunger in our country. That is why these two SNAP cuts, the cut in November 2013 and the cut in the farm bill, were not just disappointing, but they were actually damaging. We saw real cuts to real people.

For example, look at Luis Marin, who was profiled in the New York Daily News:

Food stamp cuts have dealt a double blow to Luis Marin and his family. Marin's hours have been cut from 30 to 20 hours a week at Red Apple Deli Supermarket in uptown's Hamilton Heights, where his boss, Ramon Murphy, is losing business because of the food stamp cutbacks. And Marin, 56, his wife, and their two little girls—who subsist on his \$8-an-hour income—also saw their food stamps benefits drop to \$397 a month in November and have had to change their eating habits.

It is not just low-income families in our urban areas; military families are using SNAP more than ever. In fact, military families used food stamps more in fiscal year 2013 than in any other year. Members of the military redeemed almost \$104 million worth of food stamps over that time, about \$5 million more than the previous year.

The thing many of my colleagues don't seem to understand is that cuts to SNAP don't just change the amount of money the Federal Government spends. As you can see from the case that I highlighted with Mr. Marin, these cuts hurt real American people. We are taking food away from children and away from poor families.

That is why I am pleased that seven of our Nation's Governors are taking the courageous stand that this Congress wouldn't take. The cut included in the farm bill was harmful, but it only affected 17 States. That is because it only dealt with a program called Heat and Eat, a program that linked LIHEAP and SNAP together. The farm bill changed the way States could continue participating in that program. Essentially, States could continue if they increased the State contribution from \$1 to \$20 in LIHEAP benefits. These seven States—Connecticut, Massachusetts, Montana, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island—are playing by the new rules Congress established in the farm bill, and thankfully, they are saying that they are not going to let low-income food insecure people in their State feel the pain of these cuts, even if Congress is going to cruelly and cowardly cut SNAP in the name of deficit reduction.

I sit on the Agriculture Committee, and I remember when the committee didn't have the votes to abolish the Heat and Eat Program entirely. The \$20 level was supported by the chairman of the committee and is now the law of the land. Yet the distinguished Speaker of this House continues to say that States are somehow cheating when all they are doing is following the law that he shepherded through this House. Perhaps he didn't read the bill, or perhaps he doesn't understand the fact that there are millions and millions of people in this country who are hungry.

I want to commend the Governors of these States, including the Republican Governor of Pennsylvania and the Governor of my home State of Massachusetts, for doing the right thing and taking action to prevent these cuts from taking effect and preventing their citizens from going hungry.

I am grateful to these Governors and the Governors of 10 other States who are still working to enact this change in law, and for taking the actions that many in this Congress simply did not take. I say "thank you" to the Governors for preventing hunger from getting worse in those States. Hopefully, they can be an example for all of us in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, we were elected to help people. These cutbacks in SNAP and

other nutrition programs have hurt our fellow citizens. These cuts are unconscionable. They are a rotten thing to do. We in this Congress and the leadership of this Congress have to stop beating up on poor people, have to stop diminishing their struggle. Surely we can come together in a bipartisan way and agree that hunger is not acceptable in the richest country in the history of the world. We need to end hunger now, not make it worse. So let's come together and end hunger now.

CELEBRATING 193RD ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 193rd anniversary of Greek independence. Citizens of Greece have always been a proud people in body, mind, and spirit.

□ 1030

From Pericles, Greek statesman and general, dubbed the first citizen of Athens; to Plato, who laid a groundwork in philosophy so vast that the entirety of European philosophical tradition is said to simply be a footnote to his work; to Count Ioannis Kapodistrias, the first head of state of an independent Greece, Greeks have been exceptional, Mr. Speaker.

I am almost certain that Thomas Jefferson cast an eye across the Atlantic towards Greece when he uttered these words in 1821, when Greece declared their independence:

The flames kindled on the 4th of July 1776 have not spread over much of the globe to be extinguished by the feeble engines of despotism—on the contrary, they will consume these engines and all who work them.

It is no coincidence that the Feast of Annunciation, a commemoration of the conception of Jesus Christ, was chosen to ignite the action for independence.

I am blessed to be of two cultures that have been beacons of liberty for all of civilization, the place of my birth, the land of the free, and the home of the brave, the United States of America; and the land of my ancestors, the birthplace of democracy, the Hellenic Republic.

Many Greeks fought for years, clutching to the heritage, culture, and faith. Bishop Germanos of Patras raised the emblem of freedom for Hellenes, the flag bearing a white cross and nine blue and white stripes representing the nine letters in Eleftheria, which means freedom.

Eight years of bloodshed and battle led to the Treaty of Adrianople, the formal declaration of a free and independent Greece.

Greece was the world's first advanced civilization, one that provided a cultural heritage that has influenced the world. Firsts in philosophy, mathematics, politics, sports, and art all stemmed from a free Greece.

Liberty and justice, freedom to determine the path of one's own life, these

are human desires and were embodied by Greece throughout their fight for independence.

Those unyielding Hellenes paid life and limb for those desires, and generations of Greeks—Americans of Greek descent as well—for decades to come owe their ancestors many thanks.

As George Washington once said:

Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth.

This held true in Greece in 1821, as it did in America in 1776.

"Freedom or Death"—Eleftheria Thanatos—was the battle cry of the revolutionaries nearly 200 years ago. It rings true today. Freedom is a powerful and beautiful notion. The Greek people achieved that for themselves 193 years ago, and I am proud to celebrate in memory of those who fought bravely to shed the shackles of the Ottoman Empire.

Long live Greece—zito Hellas—and God bless America.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MUSEUM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of Women's History Month. On March 13, my colleagues joined together on the House floor to call for the passage of H.R. 863, which would call for a commission to study the potential creation of a national women's history museum in our Nation's Capital.

They discussed the critical need for the museum and recognized the many women who have shaped our Nation. My colleagues are historic women in their own right. Today, I am proud to join them in voicing my support for H.R. 863.

H.R. 863 would establish a commission to study and recommend a plan of action for the establishment and maintenance of a national women's history museum here in Washington, D.C.

The National Women's History Museum will be the first of its kind to celebrate women's history and women's contributions to the United States. It will not cost the Federal Government a dime since every cent will be privately raised.

Why is it necessary? Well, from our Nation's founding, women have played a crucial role, providing numerous contributions to help create and reinforce this great foundation of our Nation. Women have changed the course of history, and we are long overdue in celebrating and recognizing them and their accomplishments.

Women's history is largely missing from textbooks, from memorials, from museum exhibits, and from many other venues. Of the 210 statues in the United States Capitol, only nine are of female leaders.

Less than 5 percent of the 2,400 national historic landmarks chronicle women's achievement, and a recent survey of some 18 history textbooks